



London Borough
of Hounslow

Travel Assistance Reviews and Appeals Process

February 2020

REVIEWS AND APPEALS

In line with Department for Education Guidance, the Council operates a two-stage review and appeals process.

Where a review or an appeal request has been submitted, the original decision will stand until such time as the review or appeal has been considered and a decision notified to the parents/carers.

Where the decision is not to provide travel assistance, it will be the responsibility of the parents/carers/young person to make arrangements to get to/from school/college/placement until the review or appeal process has been completed.

1.1 First Stage – Review

If parents/carers/young person wish a decision to be reviewed:

- This should be requested in writing within 20 working days from the date of the travel assistance decision letter (contact details will be outlined in the decision letter)
- It is important to supply as much evidence as possible in support of the review request, including why the Policy has not been applied correctly.
- It may be necessary to request additional information or clarification of the information supplied. Where additional information is required, this may delay the outcome of the review.
- The review will be carried out by a Senior Officer who was not involved in the original decision. The outcome of the review, where possible, will be provided within 20 working days from receipt of the request for a review.

1.2 Second Stage – Appeals

If the outcome of the review agrees with the original decision the parents/carers/ young person can appeal the decision and submit a request for an appeal:

- It must be requested in writing within 20 working days from the date of the review outcome letter. If not received within 20 working days, the Council's first stage review decision will stand.
- It is important to supply as much evidence as possible in support of the appeal request, including why the School Travel Assistance Policy has not been applied correctly.
- Within 40 working days of receipt of an appeal request, an independent panel made up of 3 Senior Officers (who were not involved in the original Assessment or Review) will:
 - hear written or verbal representation from the parents/carers/young person, including where they believe the School Travel Assistance Policy has not been applied correctly.
 - hear appropriate representation from Council Officers/ representatives.
 - be guided by the Council's School Travel Assistance Policy, in particular whether the policy has been applied correctly and whether there are any grounds for (amending the decision.
- The Independent Panel will issue a final decision letter to within 5 working days.

REVIEW AND APPEALS PROCESS

Application for travel assistance is declined or offers travel arrangements the parent/carer considers unsuitable



Parent/Carer Challenges (within 20 working days of the date of the decision letter)

Parent/Carer/young person contests to outcome of the assessment on the basis of:

- Entitlement
- Distance measured
- Route safety
- Consideration of exceptional circumstances



Stage 1 Review (within 20 working days of the date of the decision letter)

Reviewed by a Senior Officer.

The Senior Officer reviews the original decision and sends a written notification of the outcome, including:

- Detailed reasoning for the decision made
- Notification of option to escalate to stage 2 (an appeal)



Parent/carer/young person contests (within 20 working days of the date of the decision letter)

Parent contests the Senior Officer's decision



Stage 2 (within 40 working days of receipt of the letter)

Review by a suitably qualified Independent Appeals Panel

Independent appeals panel hears written / verbal representation.

The appeals panel will not consist of any officer previously involved.



Independent appeal panel sends a final decision letter (within 5 working days), including details of the Local Government Ombudsman (LGO).